



Kentucky



AGRICULTURAL

News

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INSIDE



Agriculture
Commissioner
Richie Farmer

Biosecurity is
everybody's
concern.

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Protecting the consumer

Gas pump, amusement ride inspectors
serve every Kentuckian every day.

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PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID

Let's go!

Check out agritourism sites for a vacation or a weekend trip that's unique and close to home.

Kentucky farmers are looking for new ways to make money on the farm. Kentucky families are looking for places where they can go for some fun and fresh air that aren't too far away.

Farmers and tourists alike are finding what they're looking for in the form of agritourism.

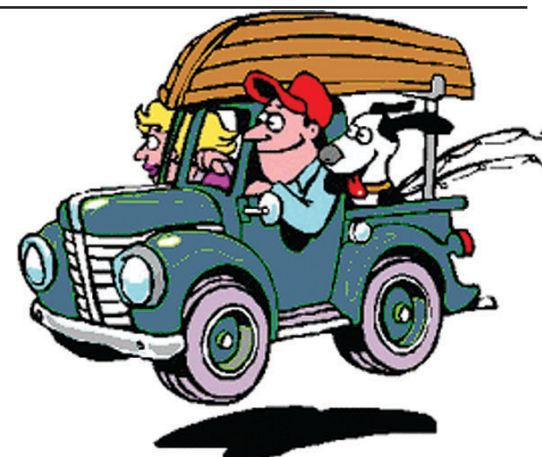
Horse breeding farms have long been a staple of the state's tourism industry. Today, Kentucky agritourism also offers corn mazes, petting zoos,

homemade ice cream, educational opportunities for children, Kentucky Proud foods, horseback riding, bed and breakfasts, farm tours, pumpkin

Profiles of a few of Kentucky's agritourism destinations are on pages 6, 7 and 12.

patches, U-pick operations, wine tasting and many other attractions.

"Kentucky has more than 200 Kentucky Proud agritourism destinations," Agriculture Commissioner Richie



Farmer said. "Agritourism provides farmers another source of income, but it also gives them a chance to show people how a farm operation works and where their food and fiber come from."

For more information on agritourism, contact Kelly Ludwig, director of the state Office of Agritourism, at (502) 564-4983 or visit the Kentucky Department of Tourism's Web site at www.kentuckytourism.com to see a list of agritourism events and festivals throughout the Commonwealth.

The future is now on Kentucky farms

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE

Kentucky Agricultural News

A farmer driving his trusty tractor is a common sight seen all over Kentucky from spring planting to the fall harvest.

But that sight may become rare 10 years from now if University of Kentucky agriculture researcher Dr. Scott Shearer has anything to do with it.

"Most of today's production agriculture is based on large equipment operated by humans," he stated. "Bigger machines mean greater worker productivity.

"[But] what if equipment of the future does not require human operators?"

To back up his statement, Shearer shared computer

See *THE FUTURE*, page 8



Chris Aldridge

The Ellis Farms fertilizer spreader truck Jana Scott is driving is equipped with a GPS computer showing a map of the farm.

Raising sheep hailed as tobacco alternative

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE

Kentucky Agricultural News

Raising sheep has become an attractive alternative for Kentucky farmers looking to diversify with livestock.

"Kentucky's sheep industry is on the rebound after years of decline," Commissioner of Agriculture Richie Farmer said. "Demand for Kentucky lamb is outpacing supply. Lamb has a great deal of untapped potential for farmers looking for an alternative to tobacco."

Governor Ernie Fletcher, in cooperation with Commissioner Farmer, proclaimed May "Spring Lamb Month." On the first Saturday of that month, lamb took center stage on dinner plates at the 131st running of the Kentucky Derby, where Gil Logan, executive chef at Churchill Downs, served many Kentucky Proud foods to visitors from around the world.

Logan requested 1,500 Kentucky Proud lambs for Churchill's spring meet because of their superior taste and freshness. He was able to get only 200 with the help of KDA and the Kentucky Sheep and Wool Producers Association.

"We're a livestock state, be it beef cattle, horses, hogs, goats – we do all that very well," said Warren Beeler,

assistant director of the KDA's Division of Value-Added Animal and Aquaculture Production. "We want to drum up a little interest and get more people in the sheep business. There's money to be made in Kentucky with sheep. There is demand out there."

Roger Thacker agreed. The native of England has been raising young lambs, mostly for export, for 21 years on his farm near Versailles. "The market is there," he said. "It's growing."

Beeler said lamb meat is slowly becoming more popular in the United States. "Americans are consuming a pound to a pound and a half per year per person," he said.

Thacker said his lambs not only taste good; they're good for you.

Beeler pointed out

the meat is low in fat.

"It's a lighter meat," Thacker said. "When you eat it, you don't get that heavy feeling, like 'Oh, I've gotta take a nap.' It's very nutritious, and it's lower in cholesterol than most meats."

Sheep are being marketed through the same marketing infrastructure that has been established to serve Kentucky's growing goat industry. Tess Caudill, the KDA's goat and sheep marketing specialist, started graded goat sales in Kentucky.

Demand for Kentucky lamb is outpacing supply."

—Commissioner Richie Farmer



Bill Holleran

Ted Thompson of Pendleton County loads sheep to be processed for the Kentucky Derby.

"If there's money to be made in goats, there's money to be made in sheep," Beeler said. "The same people that buy goats buy sheep. And it's a bigger animal – you can sell a few more pounds than you can with goats."

Thacker pointed to the results of a survey in January that listed Kentucky with 1,800 sheep producers with 32,000 head. "Kentucky is one of three states whose sheep numbers have increased rapidly," Thacker said, noting the state's herd grew by 8,000-10,000 head last year. "Kentucky is now listed among sheep-producing states."

Thacker said Kentucky was a sheep-herding mecca a half-century ago, boasting 1 million head of sheep in 1954. But an epidemic of foot rot – a highly contagious, flesh-eating bacterial

infection – and predators, mainly dogs, caused the herd to shrink as low as 12,000 before rebounding recently.

"Those two things can be handled now," Thacker said. "There are foot rot vaccines and electric fences."

Beeler said sheep producers also use guard dogs, llamas, or donkeys to protect their flocks.

Four to five ewes, or female sheep, can replace one cow, Beeler said, and the animals are natural foragers that turn grass into money.

"It's not hard to get involved," Beeler said. "We can locate the ewe lambs for you. Like goats, it doesn't cost an arm and a leg to get in. A ewe sells anywhere from \$100-200."

For more information, contact Beeler or Caudill at (502) 564-4983.

Horticulture, technology, security among field day topics

UK, KAN reports

The latest in agricultural and horticultural research efforts will be in the spotlight July 28 at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture's 2005 Field Day at the Research and Education Center in Princeton.

The event, last held in 2002, also offers an array of educational and fun activities for youth and families. Approximately 2,000 people are expected to attend.

"One of the main purposes of the event is for our clientele – farmers, con-

sumers and even youth – to be able to come and see the things we are working on at the Research and Education Center and throughout the College of Agriculture to help them in their operations and homes," said Richard Coffey, field day chairman and Extension swine specialist.

This year's event will feature 17 production-related tours focusing on protecting water quality, farm security, beef cattle, tobacco, forages, weed management in grain crops, corn and soybean production, soil fertility and tillage and soybean rust. Other tours include orchards and vineyards, small fruits

and ornamentals, vegetable crops, nursery-grown maples and fruit tree weed control, biosystems and agricultural engineering, precision agriculture, handling atrazine and proper disposal, and an overview of the UK soils lab.

Some other highlights include automated steering systems, which will be demonstrated in the precision agriculture tour; a virtual ethanol plant tour by biosystems and agriculture engineering; environmental quality and financial assistance; and dealing with problems associated with illegal uses of land, such as methamphetamine production.

There will be Family and Consumer Sciences exhibits and displays and booths and activities for youth.

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture will set up a farm safety display and the Kentucky Agriculture and Environment in the Classroom's Mobile Science Activity Center at the field day.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. CDT. Tours, demonstrations and exhibits will be open from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Lunch will be available from various commodity groups, and Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) credits have been approved for a number of the tours.

Ag education program opens in Ky. schools

By **LEEWOOD PUGH**

Kentucky Agricultural News

Agriculture affects everybody every day, and most anything children learn in school can be connected to agriculture in some way. Starting this fall, the Agriculture Adventures: Kentucky program will teach Kentucky schoolchildren about agriculture's connection to their everyday lives.

"Our young people need to learn about why agriculture is important to all of us," Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. "The people involved with the Agriculture Adventures: Kentucky program have the skills to provide Kentucky's children with a valuable learning experience."

Agriculture Adventures: Kentucky is a production of the COSI science museum in Columbus, Ohio. The host of the production, "Chef Parmesan," presents a 45-minute assembly with "Derby" the horse about the origins of food and fiber in a cooking show setting called Lunch-room Live. He starts the program with soil and ends with a cheese pizza, to show how pizza comes from agriculture.

After the assembly, students go through several hands-on stations that feature a variety of tools that help them learn even more about agriculture.

Students can try their hand at milking a fiberglass cow, learn how to plant seeds and make them grow, and grind wheat into flour. Inherit the Farm uses a spinning wheel that presents decisions the children have to make to run a farm and make a profit.

The program's creators made some features to fit Kentucky, such as "Derby" the horse, farmland preservation, and Product Pandemonium, which looks at Kentucky Proud products and what raw food source they come from.

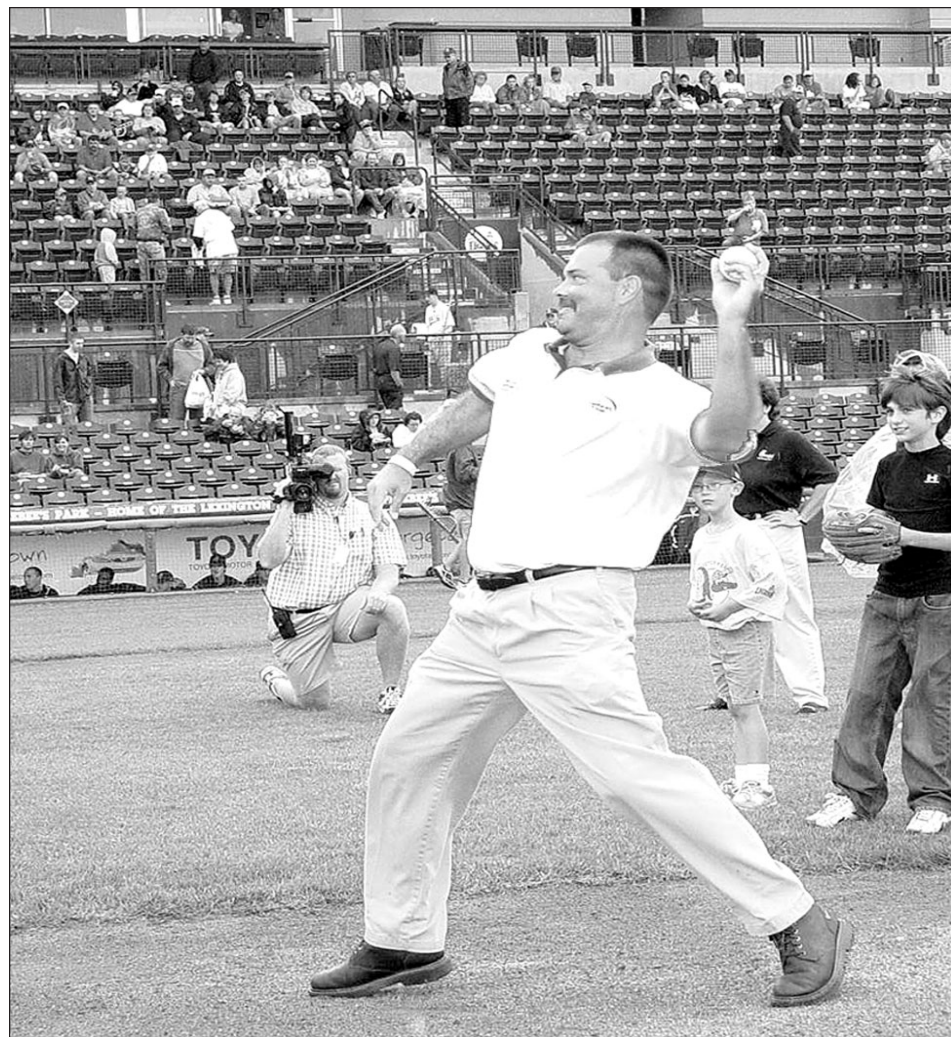
"We want to reinforce the Kentucky Proud logo, and what it means, to the children," said Rayetta Boone, assistant director of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Agriculture Education, Farm Safety and Farmland Preservation.

COSI designed the program to align with Kentucky core content for assessment and National Science Standards.

Agriculture Adventures: Kentucky will begin in late August. COSI and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture have signed up 67 schools so far. The program lasts one full school day and can accommodate 480 students per day.

For more information, go to the KDA Web site, www.kyagr.com, and click on Education Resources in the pull-down menu.

Play ball!



Ted Sloan

Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer fires a strike to start the Lexington Legends' game against the Lake County Captains on Farmer/Dairy Night June 1 at Applebee's Park.

State fair display notes KDA's consumer services

By **LEEWOOD PUGH**

Kentucky Agricultural News

It's almost that time again. Food, rides, competitions and even educational experiences are right around the corner at the Kentucky State Fair Aug. 18-28 at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center in Louisville.

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture's display theme this year will be "Kentucky Department of Agriculture: Reaching All Kentuckians... past, present and future."

"The state fair has a tradition as a showplace for the best of Kentucky agriculture," said Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer. "The Department's theme and displays will show how we reach everyone in Kentucky every day."

In the South Wing KDA's Farm and

Home Safety program will set up its grain bin safety display. The South Wing display will include exhibits of Ag Adventures: Kentucky, an educational and entertaining program for children that will start in Kentucky schools this fall, and the Smart-board, an interactive computer program where children can test their knowledge about agricultural topics. Other displays will include a farmers' market, organic garden, crop display, Consumer and Environmental Protection center, and Animal Health and Production center.

The Department's West Hall display will include another Farm and Home Safety booth with the one-of-a-kind rollover tractor simulator, the bees and honey booth, and a Kentucky Proud booth. The KDA will provide a station that will allow farm owners to register their premises online as part of

the process of establishing a nationwide animal identification program. The country ham display and judging will take place in the West Hall, and the popular chick hatchery will be in both the South and West halls. KDA's Office of Consumer and Environmental Protection will staff booths highlighting the duties of the Food Distribution, Regulation and Inspection and Environmental Services divisions. Exhibits of hay, grain, tobacco, eggs, fruits and vegetables will be on display.

The fair will kick off Aug. 18 with the Commodity Breakfast, a salute to Kentucky's farm commodity organizations that is sponsored by the Department. KDA also will sponsor a farmers' market tent outside the West Hall.

Again this year Department staff will spray for mosquitoes, check health papers for all animals entered in live-

stock shows, work the livestock shows and inspect amusement rides for safety.

New at the state fair will be the Kaleidoscope Discovery Zone, a gigantic interactive learning center in the South Wing. Topics will include Science of Tsunamis, Project Global: Asia, and Kentucky by the Book, which brings to life books written by authors from the state.

Headlining concerts will be Kenny Chesney, Gretchen Wilson with Big and Rich, Alan Jackson and Hilary Duff.

The World's Championship Horse Show will be held Aug. 21-27. More than 2,000 horses will compete for more than \$1 million in awards.

Tickets for the Kentucky State Fair can be purchased on its Web site at www.kystatefair.org, at the gate or at Kroger stores. Parking is \$5 at the gate.

For more information, visit the state fair Web site or call (502) 367-5002.



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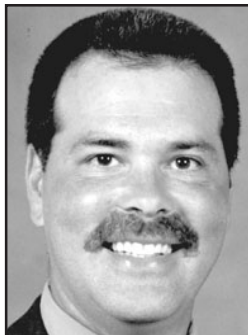
It's everyone's job to be prepared

A recent state homeland security exercise based on an agricultural scenario demonstrated the need for government officials, businesses and private citizens to be prepared in the event of an act of bioterrorism.

The exercise was sponsored by the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security and the governor's office. KDA staff participated, along with representatives of local, state and federal agencies and commodity groups.

Kentuckians can be proud of the professionalism shown by the officials who participated in the exercise. Much of it went relatively smoothly, but there were a few instances where things didn't go as planned. That was part of the purpose of the exercise – to look for flaws in our planning and to measure the players' reactions when unexpected problems popped up. An exercise where everything goes smoothly might make us feel good, but it would also be worthless.

We at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture are doing all we can to prepare for a potential attack or outbreak.



Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner

Richie Farmer

We are working on getting every agricultural premise in Kentucky registered as the first step in establishing a national animal identification system. We have sent staff to national biosecurity conferences, and some of our Animal Health staff have gained valuable experience helping with disease eradication efforts in California, Virginia and England.

The very best approach to an emergency, of course, is to prevent it from happening in the first place. Some ways you can help include:

- Restrict vehicle traffic on the farm.
- Schedule and accompany all visitors to your farm. Limit areas to be visited.

- Know each visitor's exposure to animals for the previous four days.
- Provide protective clothing and/or footwear for visitors.
- Maintain a log of visitors and vehicles that enter the farm.
- Wear clean, disinfected boots when visiting the stockyards or someone else's farm.
- Isolate new animals from other animals by at least 300 yards for 21 days. Test before they enter the herd. Maintain strict entry and exit sanitation for personnel in the isolation area.

Do not feed ruminant animal feeds containing animal by-products.

- Keep pets out of confined feeding facilities.
- Control rodents and flies.
- Ban all known foreign food and food products from the farm.
- Report all suspicious activity and events to local authorities.

I hope you will take a few minutes to think about these and other things you can do to protect your farm. Your life may not be at stake, but your investment in your farm may be.

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Kentucky businesses benefit from biofuels boom

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE

Kentucky Agricultural News

Gasoline and diesel fuel prices that top the \$2 mark have renewed the urgency for developing alternative fuels that lower our nation's dependence on imported oil. Two of the most popular alternative fuels are "biofuels" made from corn and soybeans: ethanol and biodiesel.

"I strongly support efforts to turn Kentucky crops into clean, renewable fuels," Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. "We have the best scientists, the best engineers and the best technicians in the world. They are developing a 21st century energy program that will lead America toward energy independence and self-sufficiency."

Commissioner Farmer added: "Not only will developing these resources help break America's dependence on foreign oil, they will provide new markets and new income for Kentucky's farm families and rural communities. It's truly a win for everyone."

The huge Commonwealth Agri-Energy ethanol processing plant near Hopkinsville opened in March 2004. In

the beginning it produced ethyl alcohol from corn like a giant still at a rate of 20 million gallons per year. Expansion this year increased output to an annual rate of 23 million gallons in May, and a maximum capacity of 30 million will be reached in October.

In contrast, Union County Biodiesel Co.'s facility can be easily mistaken for one of the many soybean farms that dot the Ohio River valley near Sturgis. The nondescript state-of-the-art processing facility works around the clock, making nearly 7,000 gallons of soybean oil per day. The oil is sold to distributors, where it is blended in varying amounts with diesel fuel and sold to retail outlets in Kentucky and four surrounding states.

High prices for gasoline and diesel have increased demand for ethanol and biodiesel, which are blended in varying percentages with both petroleum-based fuels. "Our production has really ramped up," said Andy Sprague, owner/operator of Union County Biodiesel, which started production Jan. 1. "We've got a demand base that warrants 24-hour production. We're hitting on all cylinders right now."

Mick Henderson, general manager of Commonwealth Agri-Energy, said a combination of record-high gas prices and low corn prices helped his business make a profit in its first year.

"We have a tremendous opportunity to break into new markets," he said. "I'm excited about the opportunity of low-priced ethanol [competing] against high-priced gasoline."

Henderson is hoping Congress will pass an energy bill requiring ethanol blends nationwide. In the meantime, as of Jan. 1, 2006, Kentucky businesses no longer will be allowed to sell gasoline formulated with MTBE (Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether), which adds oxygen to gas to make it burn better. Kentucky is one of several states that have banned MTBE in gas because it has been found to contaminate groundwater.

Lawmakers in nearby Tennessee also could boost Commonwealth Agri-Energy's business by signing a bill requiring a 5 percent ethanol blend in all gas sold in the Volunteer State.

The ethanol plant is owned by Hopkinsville Elevator Co., the second-largest grain marketing cooperative in

the Southeast, made up of 2,300 local farmers, and the Kentucky Corn Growers Association, which has 700 members.

Henderson said the plant bought more than two-thirds of last year's total corn crop in Christian County.

Union County Biodiesel also plans to expand. Sprague plans to duplicate his current operation in other locations. "It's better in biodiesel to have small business structures geared to meet the specific demands of an area," said Sprague, a civil engineer who also runs a surveying business. "We don't have to build a mega facility; we think we can manipulate production to meet demand because our technology is so efficient."

Sprague's patented electric catalyst method of processing soybeans eliminates caustic byproducts created when using the traditional batch process. He said his product produces a higher BTU and lower emissions.

"We haven't turned a profit yet," Sprague said. "The market conditions are favorable for biodiesel becoming a profitable venture, but like any new business, we've got to recover our initial investment."

Security workers practice



Ted Sloan

Buddy Pence, right, with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, sprays a disinfectant on protective clothing worn by Brian Meade during a state homeland security exercise June 22 in Woodford County.

Young market leader earns award

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE

Kentucky Agricultural News

For 12 of his 18 years, A.J. Nelson has been selling vegetables grown on his family's farm near Pleasureville. His experience and dedication have earned him a leadership position at the Carrollton farmers' market.

That experience also was a big reason he won the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Farmers' Market Entrepreneur Contest. The award and \$500 prize were presented to the recent Henry County High School graduate at the FFA State Convention in June in Louisville.

"One goal of this [contest] is to bring more young people into the farmers' market venue," said KDA marketing specialist Janet Eaton. "I was impressed by A.J.'s depth of knowledge regarding farmers' markets and selling to the retail customer. He has clear goals and the dedication to see them through."

Eaton sat on the panel that interviewed and judged the entrants, along with KDA co-workers Bill Holleran and intern Kenn Gaines.

"Young leaders like A.J.," Holleran said, "will ensure the success of farmers' markets across Kentucky for years to come."



A.J. Nelson

"Gosh, that's flattering," Nelson said of the comments. "I'm very focused on increasing farmers' markets. We've got to get the word out - some people don't even know about them. We need to build these in our communities, and the KDA is helping to do that."

A.J. is vice president of the board of directors of the Riverview Farmers' Market in Carrollton and runs his family's booth there. Despite his age, he said older sellers look to him for guidance "because I've been doing this longer than some of them."

When he was 6 years old, Henry County didn't even have a farmers' market. So A.J. and parents Ed and Suzanne Nelson improvised.

"We went around and sold out of the back of our truck," A.J. said. "The first year, I handed out bags. Gradually, as I got older, they gave me more responsibilities and trained me."

The Nelsons specialize in tomatoes, with more than 5,000 plants covering one acre, but they also grow a half-acre of corn and another acre of mixed vegetables. They now have five outlets for their produce, including farmers' markets in New Castle, LaGrange, Middletown and Frankfort.

A.J. will attend Eastern Kentucky University this fall. He plans to major in business marketing, drawing on his real-world experience of selling at farmers' markets.

"Doing it helped develop my people skills," he added, "which is a huge part of marketing."

Third generation making a living on family farm

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE

Kentucky Agricultural News

It took the words of Milt Corley's friend to plant the seed that blossomed into Christian Way Farm.

The 300-acre farm in northeastern Christian County has been in Corley's family for three generations. His grandfather, Guy Corley, bought the land in the 1920s with bonus money he earned from serving in World War I. When Guy died in 1973, he left Milt the original 60 acres in his will, but it took Milt a quarter century to figure out what to do with it. Conventional farming was not an option after Milt grew up watching his father, Edwin, take a second job to make ends meet.

"Several years ago, I was telling a friend what I was doing [for a living]," said Corley, who then managed Jackson's Orchard in Bowling Green. "He knew I had land. He said, 'Why aren't you doing that back home? You could have your own place and be your own boss.'"

"That friend of mine planted the seed. I got to thinking and praying. It took a couple of years, but I figured if I was ever going to do anything with this land, I had to do it then."

So in January 1998, Milt left the job security of his seven-year position at Jackson's Orchard to start Christian Way Farm, a place where families from nearby cities could go to get a taste of life on the farm. When Milt told his father of his intentions to return to the family farm, Edwin was so happy that



Photos by Chris Aldridge

Milt Corley helps a first-grader feed "Hershey," a hungry calf. Children try various farm chores at Christian Way Farm.

he deeded his 240 acres over to his son.

For the first year and a half, Milt commuted daily to the farm – more than 100 miles roundtrip – from his home in Bowling Green. He cleared brush that had grown up, since the farm

had not been cropped in nearly a decade, and restored some of his grandfather's old farm equipment to put on display for visitors. Milt moved there with his wife, Janie; 13-year-old twins Craig and Jennifer, and 9-year-old Rachael when the family's new house was completed in August 1999.

Christian Way Farm is particularly popular for school tours it calls "Sowing Seeds for Tomorrow's Harvest." On benches in the middle of a field, Janie quizzes the children on the ingredients needed to make tacos. She sends students to pick the ingredients in nearby fields; then they use a pestle to grind the tomatoes, onions, peppers, cilantro, and garlic cloves to make salsa.

"We pick a familiar food for the children," Janie said, noting she did pizzas last year and hamburgers and

French fries two years ago.

"She has a gift, and she loves what she does," Milt said of Janie, who has a degree in Christian education from Emory & Henry College in Virginia.

"I've always been able to do the [farm] work, but when it comes to standing up there and having the words to convey to the children, that's where Janie's at. That's what makes it a wonderful mix, the two of us."

After the taco lesson, students board a wagon for a ride to a barn to see the animals. They feed a baby calf with a bottle and a

baby goat out of their hands, and view pigs and a donkey.

The kids plant pumpkin seeds in small peat pots to take home and are encouraged to transplant them there.

While Janie teaches, Milt spends

See EVERY DAY, page 8



First-graders plant soybeans at Christian Way Farm.



DH Resorts is horses ... and much more

By **LEEWOOD PUGH**
Kentucky Agricultural News

We want to bring back the family concept. That's what we've been about," said Stephen Dobson, owner of DH Resorts in Fleming County. Described as "a dude ranch in Kentucky," DH Resorts is a getaway the whole family can enjoy.

DH Resorts opened as a horse campground in 1990 with 300 acres and four horses. Fifteen years later, it has 28 horses, 17 stalls, 1,200 acres and accommodations of all sorts. "We've just gotten bigger," said Dobson.

DH Resorts offers a wide variety of activities. Guest can go horseback riding, take lessons on caring for horses, camp, fish or swim.

Many guests bring their own horses, but others choose to rent the horses provided. A horse owner also can board a horse at DH and allow it to be used by other guests when the owner is not riding it.

The resort hosts school programs, youth groups and other organizations. Some groups will stay in the modern bunk house above the main barn. Up to 20 people can sleep in the bunk house. It has a kitchen, dining room and four full baths.

Guests who stay for a few days to learn about horse care are assigned a horse to care for. Those who go horseback riding can choose from five different trails on the property.

If the horses aren't enough, step outside the stables and see the goats, rabbits and ducks at the petting zoo. Or take a dip in the pool, which opens Memorial Day weekend and is available to overnight guests only.

The Horseshoe Café restaurant was completed in 2001 and took Dobson a year and a half to build. Located by the campground, it is open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The restaurant stays open through Thanksgiving.

Unfurnished one-room cabins are located in the campground. Stalls for horses are located nearby with a bath house in the center of the campground. A playground, picnic tables and volleyball net are set up for recreation.

The 5,000-square-foot Mountain Lake Manor is on the other side of a ridge from the main grounds. This remodeled former hotel, which overlooks a private 22-acre lake, has three rooms and two suites. Guests can go fishing, pedal boating or canoeing in the lake. The manor and the restaurant both open during the holidays for parties.

Dobson, who holds a master's degree in engineering, builds many of the facilities and maintains them himself.

DH Resorts attracts weddings, receptions, reunions, company picnics and Christmas parties as well as individuals and youth groups. The resort has a corn maze in the fall.

Guests have traveled from as far away as New York, California and



Photos by Ted Sloan

Stephen Dobson opened DH Resorts as a horse campground in 1990.

Hawaii. Dobson said one guest was from France and one may be coming this year from Germany.

DH Resorts employs 12-15 people. Some are guides from Morehead State University's equine program.

Dobson came from Toledo, Ohio, and started this project in 1988. His wife, Charlotte Harris Dobson, a doctor in Maysville, is from Virginia, so northeastern Kentucky "was a good in between point." Dobson had been through Kentucky and loved the land and scenery.

DH Resorts came from dreams that the two put together. "She was a big horse person and wanted a horse farm. I was interested in starting my own business," said Dobson.

Dobson loves his work because "it's different each day," he said. "One day I might be fixing or building something, and the next I am on TV or doing an interview. I'm always going, and I get excited about the business."

Dobson is vice chair of the River Valley Agritourism Alliance. It began earlier this year to attract more visitors to agritourism operations in the area, which also benefits the communities' economies.

DH Resorts accepts drop-ins except on Mondays and Tuesdays. The resort is open from mid-March through the end of October. For more information go to www.dhresorts.com or call 1-800-737-RIDE.



One of the unfurnished cabins at the DH Resorts campground.

Another Kentucky Proud retailer



Roger Snell

Doll's Market of Louisville joined the roster of retailers selling Kentucky Proud products.

The future is now on high-tech Kentucky farms

Continued from Page 1

drawings of two futuristic-looking prototypes of unmanned tractors that resemble spaceships more than farm equipment.

Mike Ellis' Shelby County farm has been serving as a test bed for Shearer's precision agriculture research for nine years. Ellis Farms has always been open to innovation and embraced no-till farming more than a quarter-century ago.

Ellis believes he is a decade away, maybe less, from programming unmanned farm machinery to plant and harvest his crops at the farm he co-owns with his two brothers, Bob and Jim, near Eminence.

"The idea is to program it to plant, go home and go to bed, and come back the next day and have your field planted," he said. "If we can do that, why can't we program it to reload with seed and fuel?"

Ellis predicted liability insurance will be the biggest roadblock to remote-controlled farm machinery.

Satellites drive the technology

What makes unmanned agriculture equipment possible is automated steering guided by global positioning system (GPS) satellites. More than 24 GPS satellites orbit the Earth, with four to 10 visible at any one time to receivers on the ground throughout North America. They allow anyone to know within a few feet or a few centimeters, depending on the quality of the equipment, his exact position on the planet.

Bob Wade, owner/operator of Back Forty Farms near Sonora, just purchased a new sprayer with auto steering for his 2,000-acre spread. All Wade, or a farm employee, has to do is turn the vehicle around at the edges of the field, and the GPS-guided steering system does the rest.

"Once he is on the [GPS-designated] line, he just pushes a foot pedal," Wade said. "He doesn't have to steer it. He just watches the spray boom and steers away from sinkholes or other obstacles.

"It increases our accuracy. It seems to be working pretty well."

Ellis Farms is adding a GPS steering system to an existing sprayer in an effort to save money. The farm spent \$200,000 on chemicals and \$35,000 on dry fertilizers last year.

Ellis is proudest of the farm's newest piece of equipment, a \$58,000 "smart" fertilizer spreader truck equipped with an on-board GPS computer in the cab. The exact mixture of lime, phosphate, and potash needed for each of the farm's mapped, one-square-acre grids is released. The mixture may vary from grid to grid, depending on soil samples taken every three years.

The GPS computer screen shows a map of the field. A light bar above the windshield instructs the driver which way to steer so no part of a field is fertilized twice.

Putting inputs where they're needed

Wade has been using GPS technology since 1996, when he installed a yield monitor on a combine.

Wade uses a "smart" planter that utilizes variable-rate seeding, which drops more seed in richer soil and less in poorer-yielding areas.

"It's all about putting the input [seed, fertilizer, chemicals] in the places where they do the most good," Wade said. "We've been planting less on hill-sides that have eroded and putting more seed down in fertile areas. We wouldn't have known the contrast as much without the yield monitors. We always knew the hillsides didn't yield as well, but we couldn't quantify it."

Ellis Farms crops 6,766 acres in



Chris Aldridge

Mike Ellis points out the features of the GPS computer in his farm's combine.

Shelby and Henry counties, of which it owns 1,511 acres and rents the rest.

"I can't say that it [GPS technology] has saved us any money, but we're increasing our yield," Ellis said. "Our fertilizer costs haven't gone down, but more fertilizer is going to fields that really need it and less to those that don't, rather than blanket spreading. It brings up the low levels [of soil nutrients], which brings up the yield."

Last year, Ellis Farms enjoyed its highest soybean yield ever at 59.4 bushels per acre, including a record 83.7 in one field. It achieved its second- and third-best average corn yields at 143.7 and 142.9 bushels per acre in 2003 and '04, respectively, including a record 205.0 in one field.

"If we had not had the GPS field maps, we would not be able to keep

up with such a large number of acres," Ellis said. "They are one of the best management tools we could have."

"The old farmer walking behind his horse-drawn plow knew where the clay spots were and where the good soil was. GPS allows us to do that over 6,700 acres."

Wade estimated he'll save 10 percent of his chemical costs, which he predicted will pay for his new GPS-guided sprayer "in a year or two" with its improved accuracy.

"It's also environmentally friendly," Wade said. "The more accurate we are, the less chemicals we have to put on our fields."

Wade said the new technology "allows us to get the most out of what we put on our fields."

"The bottom line," Ellis said, "is GPS allows us to use our land more efficiently and be better stewards of our resources while positioning ourselves for better yields."

Every day is a new adventure at Christian Way Farm

Continued from Page 6

most of his time mowing the 7-8 acres of grass where visitors walk to keep it cut low in an effort to deter ticks and snakes.

But last summer, Milt said the students enjoyed seeing a big black snake sunning itself in a nearby field. "They weren't scared at all," he said. "They gathered around and their teacher did a little lesson on snakes. It just laid there and let 'em stare at it."

Milt also remembered the year his

dogs caught a rabbit in front of the kids. "I thought they'd be traumatized, screaming and crying about the poor little rabbit," he said. "But they were fine with it. It's always an adventure."

Christian Way Farm is open from mid-April through July. It closes during August then reopens in mid-September through November.

Fall has proved especially popular with family-friendly Pumpkin Days every Saturday in October, when children

are encouraged to pick their own pumpkins. Harvest Praise Oct. 15 includes entertainment by Christian bands. Milt designs a corn maze for children and a difficult one for teenagers and adults.

Adults can choose from an array of Kentucky Proud products. There are daylilies and gourds they can pick, as well as cut flowers, decorative corn, crafted gourds and gift baskets to purchase. They also can buy

home-grown fruits and vegetables.

Milt doesn't regret his decision to make a living in the fields where his grandfather and father had sweated and toiled decades earlier.

"I really think this is something that's in your blood," he said. "When I was a kid, every time I stepped on this farm, I had a good feeling."

"I knew I'd get back here someday."

For more information, go to www.christianwayfarm.com.

KDA acts to meet need for gas pump checks

By CHRIS ALDRIDGE

Kentucky Agricultural News

With gasoline prices up and summer travel season here, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's gas pump testing program is more important than ever.

"We inspect gasoline pumps for accuracy and motor fuel for quality as part of our responsibility as a consumer protection and service agency," Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer said. "Our job is to make sure consumers get their money's worth at the pump."

To meet its goal of testing each of the state's 50,000 pumps annually, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Regulation and Inspection cross-trained its personnel. All 35 inspectors are now qualified to examine amusement rides, eggs, scales, and net weights of packaged goods, as well as gas and diesel pumps.

"We had a decrease in personnel," Assistant Division Director Lanny Arnold said, citing budgetary constraints. "So there was a need to cross-train existing personnel to do other duties."

While the number of state inspectors has decreased over the years, the number of pumps has increased. The number of licensed stations in Kentucky has fallen in recent years from 5,500 to 3,400, but the number of pumps has grown because newer stations generally are much larger than the "mom and pop" stations they replaced, Arnold said. The KDA counts each nozzle that dispenses fuel as a "pump," rather than the metal housing, which usually operates two or more nozzles.

Arnold said a station that is not inspected within a year is moved to the top of the list the following year.

To check the accuracy of each pump, inspectors put five gallons of fuel into a container marked in cubic inches. Each pump is required to dispense within six cubic inches of five gallons, which contains 1,155 cubic inches.

Arnold said only 3-4 percent of the state's pumps do not meet the accuracy requirement. "Most of the time, we've found they'll be on the plus side, giving some away to the customer," he said.

Arnold said consumers may call his Frankfort office at (502) 573-0282 to report a pump that may be inaccurate. An inspector will attempt to test the pump within 48 hours of notification.

Inspectors also check the calculation of price per gallon, making sure the meter inside the pump remains sealed and hasn't been tampered with. They test octane level and for water or sediment in gas. They test ethanol fuel to make sure it contains the proper blend of alcohol and gas. Starting July 1, they test new blends of biodiesel, which is a combination of soybean oil and diesel fuel.

The KDA places a sticker on each pump that passes inspection. The lack of a sticker doesn't mean the pump isn't accurate, since stations are not required to replace stickers that peel off or are painted over.

"The customer can't see the quality of fuel they're pumping or how much is going into their gas tanks," Arnold said. "So I want them to have faith in us that what they pay for is what they get."

Tag!



Photos by Ted Sloan



Kentucky Beef Network representatives tagged a group of Charolais calves in May at the Lee Sullivan farm near Paris for a research project on radio frequency animal identification. Above, Jim Akers, beef integrated resource management coordinator in the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, demonstrates how a portable device is used to detect a radio frequency from a tag in the calf's ear that contains the animal's identification number. "It's the coming thing. We need to be out in front on this," said Sullivan. Animal identification, he said, "is a marketing tool. I'm into selling bulls."

While you're having fun, ride inspectors keep it safe

By LEEWOOD PUGH

Kentucky Agricultural News

Warm weather is here, and with it are fairs and festivals with all sorts of rides and attractions. The Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Regulation and Inspection is busy performing safety checks on rides throughout the state.

"Our inspectors are well-trained to keep things safe so the people who attend these events can have a good time," said Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer. "As a consumer protection and service

agency, safety is always our No. 1 concern."

About 21 staff members perform ride inspections across the state, said Chad Halsey, manager of ride inspections. Five of the 21 perform inspections as their only duty. Others are cross-trained to perform multiple functions.

In April, 21 KDA employees attended a week-long training course in Bowling Green taught by the National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO). Inspectors must take two years of training before they can perform inspections on their own.

"Cross-training is really going to help us," said Halsey. "Rides are getting bigger, with more technology, so they take longer to inspect."

The number of inspectors has remained about the same over the years while the number of rides has nearly tripled. The KDA performed 836 inspections on mobile rides and 615 inspections on permanent rides in 2004. The number of inflatable rides and "ball crawls" has skyrocketed since the ride inspection program began in 1984.

Last year fewer than 10 people

were injured on rides in Kentucky. The Department issued 21 citations for failing to have a ride inspected. Besides carnival-type rides, other amusement attractions required by law to be inspected include go-carts, bumper boats, climbing walls, mechanical bulls, water slides, simulators, laser tag centers and play areas at fast food restaurants. Each amusement should have a sticker on it indicating it has been inspected.

To get a ride inspected or report a ride without an inspection sticker, contact Chad Halsey at (502) 573-0282.

Short Rows: *A brief look at what's new in Kentucky agriculture*

Grant boosts Kentucky Proud

Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board approved up to \$2,991,561 to assist in the development of a marketing and distribution model for Kentucky producers and Kentucky Proud products in its May meeting.

Allied Food Marketers West Inc. will utilize state funds for the two-year development of a marketing and distribution model, which will provide Kentucky producers access to retail markets that small producers with niche products currently find it difficult to enter. Allied Food Marketers West will work with Kentucky producers to create a business incubator to help farmers with the steps that they must go through to pursue their business ideas and create viable products with solid marketing programs.

The development of a marketing distribution network is a critical step for the developing businesses in Kentucky's agricultural community. In order to achieve diversification from tobacco production, developing businesses must find quicker, cost effective, and viable ways to achieve volume and scale. Rick Raque, Allied Food Marketers West, is a third-generation player in the retail food sector and brings with him an immense amount of knowledge and experience in the field of product placement and market development. Raque has experience with Kentucky's unique products, including Screamin' Mimi's salsa, Hall's Beer Cheese and Laura's Lean Beef.

For more information on this project contact Allied Food Marketers West at (502) 635-6009 or Roger Snell with the Kentucky Proud program at (502) 229-0426. To learn more about cost-share grant and loan programs available through the Agricultural Development Fund contact the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy at (502) 564-4627.

Interns join KDA

KAN staff report



Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer welcomed interns from throughout the Commonwealth to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture in May. Pictured are, from left: front row - Sarah Quigley, LeeWood Pugh, Commissioner Farmer, LaFarin Meriwether, Nikki Matthews and Joanna Tabor; middle row - Beau Whitfield, Kenneth Leavell and Philip Price; back row - Nathaniel Newton, Dustin Gumm, Bart Branstetter and Kenn Gaines. Katherine Wheatley is not pictured.

KDA helps with state fire school

KAN staff report



LeeWood Pugh

Dale Dobson, front left, Farm Safety field officer with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, teaches a class on farm rescue at the 76th annual Kentucky Fire School in June in Lexington.

UK gets \$6.6 million NIH grant

UK College of Agriculture

The National Institutes of Health has awarded a grant of more than \$6.6 million to the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture to study the toxicity of environmental pollutants with a focus on nutrition, health and disease. This is the largest single NIH grant ever received by the college.

This Nutrition and Superfund Chemical Toxicity grant will employ more than 50 people at UK, including faculty, research scientists and students.

This funding is the latest to support the work of UK's Superfund Basic Research Program (SBRP), an interdisciplinary research group which was formed to examine the potential links between various diseases and contaminants found at Superfund sites.

Kentuckian leads NJSA youth conference

Special to KAN

The nation's top youth swine leaders gathered at the 2005 National Junior Swine Association National Youth Leadership Conference April 29-May 1 in Champaign, Ill.

NJSA Vice President Hope Ballman of Leitchfield, Ky., and NJSA Director Zach Brockhaus of Tuttle, Okla., helped prepare participants for the demands of higher education in "Getting Ready for College," one of several breakout workshops offered during the event.

For more information, contact Jennifer Shike, NSR Director of Junior Activities, at (765) 463-3594, or log onto www.nationalswine.com.

Kentucky senator named to regional committee

Special to KAN

Senator Joey Pendleton, D-Hopkinsville, has been appointed to a regional committee by Senate President David Williams, R-Burkesville, in conjunction with Senate Democratic Leader Ed Worley, D-Richmond.

Appointment to the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee for the Southern Legislative Conference provides opportunities for legislators to share concerns with their counterparts in other states. The organization also offers ample research resources to compare trends and practices among states.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

NOTICE: Agriculture-related classified ads are run free of charge in KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL NEWS. FOR SALE items must be restricted to residents of Kentucky. Address advertisements to KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL NEWS, 7th Floor, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601. PRINT your name, address and city or county plainly. All communications and transactions must be made between interested parties, and the Department of Agriculture assumes no liability for such transactions. The Department of Agriculture also reserves the right to refuse advertisements as well as dismiss advertisements due to date, space restrictions, etc. Persons using this service are encouraged also to utilize private press media for their advertisements.

ANIMALS

FOR SALE: Toggenburg Bucklings, ADGA registered AT, have horns, raised CAE preventive. bagwellfarmskykids@yahoo.com, (270) 554-8817.

MINIATURE HORSES FOR SALE: Red and white with blue eyes. Colt born April 15, 2004, loves to be brushed, sweet. \$400. Full size Paint Quarter Horse Colt, red and white, born June 1, 2004. Halter broke, very nice. \$800. Red and white full size Walking Horse, born July 22, 2003. Halter broke, leads good and rides trailer very well. Good looking. \$800. Located in Mt. Olivet, Ky. Call (606) 724-5502 or e-mail jdcritters@yahoo.com.

WANTED TO BUY: Ewe lambs. Simpson Farms, (606) 561-6860.

FOR SALE: Registered beagle pups from active gun dog stock. Shots and wormed. Phone (606) 379-1516. \$100-\$135.

FOR SALE: Katahdin hair sheep. Registered and commercial. (859) 428-1491.

CHAROLAIS PERFORMANCE YEARLING BULLS. Sired by TT Real Stryker 1953H. Very good EPDs with above average weaning and yearling weights. Good pedigrees. \$1,200 each. Free delivery within 50 miles. River Ridge Farms. Call (270) 528-3323, ask for Greg, or e-mail glsweet@scrtc.com. Canmer, Ky.

FOR SALE: Registered service age Holstein bulls. A.I.-sired from high producing, high testing cows. Jm-Mar-D Holsteins, 3638 Trimble Rd., Adairville, KY 42202. Call Jim at (270) 539-9072.

TRAMMEL CHAROLAIS: Bulls, females, tops in Kentucky. Bulls test for 10 years. Bulls available with low birth weights and high weaning weights. Reasonable prices. Fred D. Trammel, 527 Trammel Rd., Bagdad, KY 40003, (502) 747-8864.

BOER GOATS FOR SALE: Registered bucks and nannies, fullbloods and percentages with papers, quality breeding and show stock, contact Larry Cole, Cole's Creek Boer Goats, Bowling Green, Ky., (270) 777-0054 or (270) 535-0054.

FOR SALE: Registered Border Collies – adorable – well marked – black & white – shots & wormed – (270) 465-7961.

FOR SALE: Registered Boer goats; bucks and nannies, fullbloods and percentages with papers. Garden Gate Boer Goats, (270) 325-2972.

MINIATURE HORSES, for fun and profit. AMHA registered. DNA'd horses of quality. Reasonable prices. Jean Daniels, Forest Farm Miniature Horses, 8080 Subtle Road, Edmonton, Kentucky 42129, phone (270) 432-5836, e-mail a61853@scrtc.com, Web page www.minihorse.ws

FOR SALE: Registered Angus bulls, A.I. sired, EPDs that meet program guidelines, fully vaccinated, fully guaranteed, delivery available. Call (270) 384-0327. Elk Creek Angus, J.M. Shelley, Columbia, Ky.

FOR SALE: Polled Hereford bulls & heifers. (502) 348-4167. Moran Farms - Bardstown - Bloomfield.

FOR SALE: Registered Boer goats; bucks and nannies, full bloods and percentage with papers. Call (270) 749-4232.

FOR SALE: Polled Hereford and Gelbvieh bulls. Meet Bull Program standards. Clifford Farms, (859) 234-6956.

FOR SALE: Registered Limousin bulls. Black Polled and Red Polled available. Call Donnie or Joey Massey, (606) 864-6961.

FOR SALE: Purebred Charolais Bulls. Hamilton Charolais, Stamping Ground, Ky. Call Jim Hamilton at (502) 535-6203 or (502) 535-6974 or e-mail hamil535@bellsouth.net.

FOR SALE: Registered Angus bulls and heifers. Bulls eligible for 50% cost-share. Call nights (502) 863-6342, days (859) 221-5958.

FOR SALE: AKC Labs. Absolutely beautiful. Black or yellow. Shots, wormed. \$125-\$250. Love people, hunting and swimming. Phone (270) 879-8708. Delivery possible.

FOR SALE: Registered English Shepherd pups. All-purpose dogs, farm-raised. Shots, wormed. Contact Janice Sallee, (270) 465-7848.

FOR SALE: Lovable and friendly llamas, males and females of all ages, breeding pairs, stud quality/pet quality males. Guard llamas for small herd animals, sheep and goats. Over 10 years experience and expertise will serve you after your purchase. Call (859) 341-4188 or e-mail drycreek@fuse.net.

FOR SALE/STUD SERVICE: Horses/ponies (all types), new/used trailers, metal roofing & siding, Mule Kote Paint, new/used tack (over 30 saddles), feed store (10% horse feed \$4.25/50lb), Wrangler, Panhandle Slim and Lucille clothing, watches, childrens and adult cowboy hats, chaps, ladies western purses, boots, etc. Gray AQHA stud service Poco & Easy Jet \$200/\$100. L&R FARMS, 1239 Morgantown Rd. (Hwy. 70), Brownsville, KY 42210. Phone (270) 286-9465, (270) 792-6636.

FOR SALE: Club calves. Maine and Chi crosses. Reasonably priced. Excellent quality. Call for detailed information. Staley Farms, Sharpsburg. (606) 247-2008.

FOR SALE: Simmental bulls, red and black, polled and AI sired. Burton's Simmental, Columbia, Ky. Phone (270) 384-5255.

FOR SALE: Registered Angus cattle, bulls and heifers. Balanced EPDs. Fall Creek Angus, Monticello, Ky. Call nights (606) 348-6588.

FOR SALE: Registered and commercial Angus bulls. Good lines, large selection, 3-7 years old. Contact Jason Smith, (270) 846-4972 and leave a message.

FOR SALE: Modern Simmental bulls — polled. AI sired, solid patterned reds or blacks, great EPDs. Chowning's Wind Rose Farm, Berea. Call (606) 986-3284.

FOR SALE: The University of Kentucky offers thoroughbred and quarter horses of various ages for sale during the year. For information about available horses, call (859) 257-7509.

FOR SALE: Kentucky mountain saddle horses. Reg. chocolate. Babies \$2,000. Bred mares. Mares with babies. Call (859) 987-7151 nights.

FOR SALE: Registered full-blood Pinzgauer heifers and bulls ready for service. Contact: Dickson's Pinzgauer Farm, Bowling Green, KY, (270) 529-2962.

EQUIPMENT

FOR SALE: Windmills for pond aeration. 20' galvanized metal tower, 6' rotary turns, diaphragm compressor. Prevents pond turnover. Controls algae. Promotes fish growth and activity. (502) 732-5908.

PLANS TO BUILD YOUR OWN BANDSAW MILLS. "The Lum-BR-Jak" can saw up to a 30" diameter log. "The Yellow • Jak • It" can saw up to a 36" diameter log. Introductory information \$3 U.S.A. or \$4 Canada, U.S. cash or U.S. \$ M.O. only. Builders plans/packets are \$51 each U.S. or \$54 each Canada (U.S. cash or U.S. \$ M.O. only). A builders 48 min. video w/53-page supplement book, same price as plans. Call or write Bill Reeks, 7104B U.S. Hwy 231 S., Cromwell, KY 42333-9605, (270) 274-3361.

PROPERTY FOR SALE

164 ACRE FARM IN LOGAN COUNTY: Fenced and creek for cattle, deer, turkey and small game for hunting. 20 minutes from Bowling Green, very private on Old Greenville Rd with county water available. Priced to sell at \$179,000. Call (270) 542-6844.

HOUSEHOLD

KENTUCKY HOSPITALITY II cookbook by the Ky. Federation of Womens Clubs contains over 1,000 recipes from members across the state plus excellent history of our state and is on sale for \$20 which can be ordered by sending a check made to KFWC and mailed to Romenza Johnson, 3341 Cemetery Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42103.

FOR SALE: Cookbook. \$10 inclues S&H. A collection of Family Favorite Recipes compiled by the members of Mt. Lebanon Missionary Baptist Church at Alvaton, Ky. Contact Michelle Corder, 1533 Cooper Dearing Road, Alvaton, Ky. 42122.

IDO MACHINE QUILTING, pretty designs. I furnish batting & thread, reasonable prices. Mail top & lining to me & I will mail back to you plus postage. (270) 842-0430.

KENTUCKY SAMPLER COOKBOOK is a cumulative work of the members and friends of The Embroiderers' Guild of America, Louisville Chapter. Great gift. Send \$10 plus \$2 postage to Judi Smith, 4605 Southern Pkwy, Louisville, KY 40214.

FOR SALE: Arabian Coloring Book designed by country artist Diana Blair. \$5 each retail or \$3 for orders of 12 or more. Contact: Diana Blair, 370 Jenkins Rd., Bowling Green, KY 42101-9439, (270) 781-5751, FAX: (270) 842-0236.

MISCELLANEOUS

WANTED TO BUY: Old barns, old log cabins and old wood. Call (859) 294-0390.

WANTED: Kentucky State Fair programs, ribbons, other items. Also, programs, books, etc. related to Saddle Horses and Hackneys. Send item, condition, price. E-mail tkccsa@aol.com or write Box 389, Lexington, KY 40508.

FOR SALE: Custom sawn turnings – mantel pieces – cherry, oak, ash, walnut. (270) 427-4569.

FOR SALE: 22"x28" print of Lewisburg, Ky. – shows old Lewisburg High School, Lewisburg Methodist Church, Mt. Pleasant Bapt. Church, Lewisburg Bank, Gower drugstore, Old Ranger Cafe, Diamond Springs Hotel. \$30. Contact Patricia Cauley Foster, 923 McPherson, Madisonville, KY 42431, (270) 821-0085.

SEEDS/PLANTS

FOR SALE: Japanese maples – crape myrtles (red, white, pink, purple) – butterfly bushes (white, purple, lavender, yellow, red, bicolor) – hollies – spruces (Norway, Serbian). 3- and 5-gallon pots. \$5 to \$15. God's Gift Farm, 4597 Bengal Rd., Campbellsville, KY 42718, (270) 465-7961.

BLUEBERRY PLANTS, Kentucky grown blueberry bushes. Low-maintenance crop with income of \$9,000 to \$18,000 per acre average possible. Larry Martin & Jean Daniels, Bluegrass Blueberries, 8080 Subtle Road, Edmonton, Kentucky 42129, phone (270) 432-5836, e-mail a61853@scrtc.com, Web page www.blueberries.biz



Lightning strikes twice at Buffalo Crossing

By LEEWOOD PUGH

Kentucky Agricultural News

Take a family drive a little off the beaten path in Shelby County and you'll find a 1,000-acre buffalo ranch. No, you're not in the Wild West, but at Buffalo Crossing.

The working buffalo farm draws close to 500,000 people per year. Robert and Julie Allen own the ranch. Their five children own Buffalo Crossing and lease part of the ranch for the business.

The business has grown steadily over the years as the family constantly tries new ideas for attractions and events. "Most of the ideas for the ranch are from Dad's idea mill. It just keeps clicking," said Jennifer Allen Cox, a co-owner and one of the Allen siblings.

Perhaps the most popular new attraction at Buffalo Crossing came as a complete surprise – a rare white buffalo that was born on the farm in June.

"It's been crazy," employee LaWanda Harrison said of the new arrival. "It's like when you have your first child. Everyone's got to come and see it."

The female is a granddaughter of the ranch's world record 3,000-pound Chief Joseph, which was struck by lightning in 2001. A contingent of Lakota Sioux will conduct a naming and blessing ceremony for her at the ranch on July 3.

Among the planned new features at Buffalo Crossing, the ESPN Super Re-

triever Series and Big Air Event for dogs will take place there for the first time this year. Buffalo Crossing held its first horse shows in May at an arena on the grounds, and another first-time event, a rodeo, will be held in July. The Christian music group Point of Grace will perform there in July for Buffalo Crossing's first large-scale concert.

Other events throughout the summer will include Big Air amateur trials, a car show, a Kids Fest, a wedding show and craft shows.

The five-acre petting zoo is one of Buffalo Crossing's most popular stops among its everyday attractions with more than 100 varieties of animals, including yaks, donkeys, miniature horses, goats, peacocks, wallabies and camels. Parents can let the kids take a pony ride around a track or play on the one-acre playground. The fun ranch also offers recreational activities such as basketball, volleyball and horseshoes as well as cane pole fishing in its lake.

Visitors can see some of the more than 500 head of buffalo on the ranch. The buffalo raised on the ranch are processed by four different processors and served in the fun ranch's restaurant. Buffalo meat appeals to body builders, heart patients and individuals with diabetes, Cox said. Buffalo has less fat and calories and more protein than other forms of meat, she said.



Chris Aldridge

A white buffalo born in June at Buffalo Crossing stays close to her mother's side.

A gathering hall on the grounds is used for corporate get-togethers, wedding receptions and family reunions. Another building is used for wedding parties to dress and prepare, and three cabins are rented for birthday parties.

In the beginning, people and tour buses would stop to see the buffalo before the ranch was opened to the public, Cox said. The barn, with its kitchen, was already a gathering place for the large family. After Buffalo Crossing

opened, the family converted the barn into a restaurant in 2000. Other attractions were added and it became Buffalo Crossing and Family Fun Ranch in 2001.

Buffalo Crossing is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. It is closed in January, February and March, but the gift shop is open year round. For more information, go to www.buffalocrossing.com or call (502) 647-0377.

Bourbeau's best plants grace KDA display at state fair



LeeWood Pugh

Bernie Bourbeau shows off some of his wares.

By LEEWOOD PUGH

Kentucky Agricultural News

You know, most everyone likes flowers," said Bernie Bourbeau, owner of Country Place Green Houses. "Flowers are something people can relate to."

With locations in three cities, Bourbeau's business is blooming, just like the flowers. Visitors to the Kentucky State Fair will see some of his best products in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's display in the South Wing of the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center.

Bourbeau began supplying the KDA's state fair display with flowers and other items about three years ago. He also conducts programs at the fair such as caring for plants and has given away free flowers.

Usually there is a theme to the display. Herbs and vegetables were used one year. "A lot depends on what we have left by that time," said Bourbeau. "We'll take an unusual plant to let people know what else is out there for them to buy."

Bourbeau grows plants at the main location in Springfield on eight acres with greenhouses. "About 95 percent of the things we sell, we grow," said Bourbeau.

The Springfield center has been in business for 32 years. Country Place Green Houses can also be found

in Lexington and Louisville; those locations have been open three years each. Bourbeau employs about 25 people between the three locations. His wife, Sandy, also manages the business and helps out.

Bourbeau said his business may move more into retail in the future. "The retail side is what we like. The staff works well with people," he said. "We'll sell things that are successful but push new and unusual plants." He said Country Place will expand its sales of landscaping plants.

"It's a good business, but a tough business. It's more of a challenge than it used to be," said Bourbeau. "You have to work harder to get a share of the market."

Bourbeau said he is looking into selling Kentucky food products such as jams, jellies and sauces. Sweet corn raised on some of his 68 acres also may be sold.

"KDA's [Kentucky Proud] marketing programs have been good," said Bourbeau. "There is good value in Kentucky products."

Originally from Connecticut, Bourbeau moved to Kentucky in 1966. He worked as a 4-H extension agent in Marion and Washington counties for 16 years. Bourbeau attended the University of Connecticut to study animals, but after working with 4-H he gained more of an interest in flowers and horticulture, which led to the greenhouse business. He and his wife live in Springfield.